

March 2009 –With the successful completion of the Constituent Assembly (CA) election on April 10, 2008, Nepal took another step forward on the road to peace.



The CA is now tasked with drafting Nepal's new constitution while also addressing significant economic, social and political issues. Many of the elected CA members are unfamiliar with the constitution-writing process and are poorly informed about the issues that will surface during the writing. It is also necessary to professionalize the CA meetings and support a transparent and inclusive constitution-writing process through the promotion and facilitation of professional and factually grounded public outreach and media coverage during the drafting of the constitution.

USAID/OTI supported the Secretariat of the Legislative Parliament of Nepal to create a professional public information interface for the CA by providing equipment and renovating facilities for a media resource center for journalists, a press conference hall, and an internal system to broadcast CA proceedings. The system utilizes a plug-in capacity at the media center for TV stations, which provides a live feed for journalists and media houses. At least 70 80 persons from different media houses, FM radio stations, and TV stations make visits on the day of CA proceedings to gather information about how the parliament works.



To date, the media center has issued approval to 39 TV stations and radios for access to this facility, which includes CNN, BBC, Al-Jazeera, Indian and Nepalese channels.

In collaboration with the Secretariat and with assistance with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other donors, USAID/OTI also provided equipment and rental of space for the Centre for Constitutional Dialogue (CCD). There is a live feed from the CA proceedings to the CCD. The CCD is a resource center that provides training, expert advice, information and dialogue space for the CA members and general public. To date, 92 CA members have signed up for basic computer training and 75 for basic English training. The CCD also conducts CA-Civil Society Forums, enabling CA members to meet and exchange ideas with civil society groups engaged in issues central to the new constitution.